

## I. AMENDMENTS

### In the Claims

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the application:

Claims 1-16. (canceled)

17. (currently amended) A vending network comprising:

a plurality of vending machines each including a wireless transceiver operative to transmit vending machine information to and from other ~~nearby~~ vending machines forming a wireless relay network, one of the vending machines in the wireless relay network for receiving vending machine information from one or more ~~a plurality~~ of the other vending machines in the wireless relay network having vending machine information to report and reporting the received vending machine information ~~at a predetermined time~~.

18. (previously presented) The network of claim 17 further comprising a consolidation unit positioned within range of the wireless relay network of vending machines, the consolidation unit configured to receive from the reporting vending machine vending machine information for each of the vending machines in the wireless relay network having vending information to report, said consolidation unit also having an interface with an established communications network.

Claims 19- 25 (canceled).

26. (previously presented) The network of claim 17 wherein the reporting of the received vending machine information is automatically performed at one or more predetermined times.

27. (previously presented) The network of claim 17 wherein the reporting of the received vending machine information is performed when the reporting vending machine is prompted to report by a received signal.

28. (previously presented) The network of claim 17 wherein the reporting vending machine reports vending machine information for each of the vending machines in the wireless relay network having vending information to report.